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APPEAL SOCIALIST CLASSICS  
EDITED BY W. J. GHENT

*No. 9*

# Socialism and Social Reform

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APPEAL SOCIALIST CLASSICS

EDITED BY W. J. GHENT

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*No. 9*

# Socialism and Social Reform

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# THE SERIES

The pamphlets in this series are composed, in the main, of selections from the published work of Socialist writers, mostly of the present day. In some of them, particularly "Socialist Documents" and "Socialism and Government," the writings used are mainly of collective, rather than individual authorship; while the Historical Sketch is the composition of the editor.

To the selections given, the editor has added explanatory and connecting paragraphs, welding the fragments into a coherent whole. The aim is the massing together in concise and systematic form, of what has been most clearly and pertinently said, either by individual Socialist writers or by committees speaking for the party as a whole, on all of the main phases of Socialism.

In their finished form they might, with some appropriateness, be termed mosaics: each pamphlet is an arrangement of parts from many sources according to a unitary design. Most of the separate pieces are, however, in the best sense classics: they are expressions of Socialist thought which, by general approval, have won authoritative rank. A classic, according to James Russell Lowell, is of itself "something neither ancient nor modern"; even the most recent writing may be considered classic if, for the mood it depicts or the thought it frames, it unites matter and style into an expression of approved merit.

For the choice of selections the editor is alone responsible. Doubtless for some of the subjects treated another editor would have chosen differently. The difficulty indeed has been in deciding what to omit; for the mass of Socialist literature contains much that may be rightly called classic which obviously could not have been included in these brief volumes.

The pamphlets in the series are as follows:

1. THE ELEMENTS OF SOCIALISM.
2. THE SCIENCE OF SOCIALISM.
3. SOCIALISM: A HISTORICAL SKETCH.
4. SOCIALIST DOCUMENTS.
5. SOCIALISM AND GOVERNMENT.
6. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.
7. SOCIALISM AND ORGANIZED LABOR.
8. SOCIALISM AND THE FARMER.
9. SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL REFORM.
10. THE TACTICS OF SOCIALISM.
11. THE SOCIALIST APPEAL.
12. SOCIALISM IN VERSE.

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## PREFACE

This pamphlet is an explanation of the Socialist attitude toward measures, usually legislative, for the remedying of social ills in accordance with the general Socialist philosophy. The chief measures which the Socialist party supports are enumerated, and reasons are given for its antagonism to the futile and trivial measures so often proposed by non-Socialist reformers. The voluntary movements—co-operation and colonization—are also considered. There is further included a treatment, though brief, of some of the more general social schemes opposed by Socialists, in particular syndicalism and the single tax. W. J. G.



# **SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL REFORM**

## **I.**

### **SOCIALIST REMEDIES AND NON-SOCIALIST REFORMS.**

BY MORRIS HILLQUIT.

To the outsider one of the most puzzling aspects of the Socialist movement is its attitude towards the modern movements for social reform. The Socialists are reformers. The Socialist program contains a large number of concrete measures or "demands" for the progressive improvement of our industrial, social and political institutions, and much of the practical political activity of Socialism is directed towards the advancement of such reform measures.

And still Socialists are often found reluctant to co-operate with non-Socialist reformers for the attainment of specific reforms. Even when such proposed reforms are apparently in line with the demands of Socialism, the separate movements for their realization are not seldom met by them with indifference, sometimes even with active opposition.

The Socialists have on that account been charged with narrowness and inconsistency, but these charges are based on an entire misconception of the character of Socialist reforms. There is a vital distinction between the reforms advocated by the Socialists and those urged by the reformers of all other shades.

#### **NON-SOCIALIST REFORM MOVEMENTS.**

The non-Socialist reform movements may be divided into two general groups: those inaugurated distinctly for the benefit of the middle classes, i. e., the small farmers, manufacturers or traders, and those supported by ideologists of all classes.

The movements of the former variety have for their invariable object the strengthening of the position of the middle class as against the increasing power of large capitalism. The measures advocated by them often contemplate the arrest of industrial development or even the return to conditions of past ages. Among such "reform" measures are the restrictions on combinations of capital and the provisions against suppression of competition. Measures of this character are reactionary even though in their formulation they sometimes coincide with working-class demands.

The ideologists of the "better classes" represent a less reactionary but not more efficient type of social reformers. These kind-hearted but short-sighted gentlemen are thoroughly convinced of the soundness of our social system as a whole. They notice occasionally certain social evils and abuses, and they endeavor to remove them in what seems to them to be the most direct way. They happen to encounter an appalling condition of poverty, and they seek to allay it by alms. They notice the spread of disease among the poor, and they build hospitals and sanitariums. They are shocked by the tidal wave of crime and vice, and they strive to lead the sinners back to the path of righteousness by moral sermons and model penal institutions. They find their elected representatives in public office incompetent and corrupt, and they unite to turn them out of office and to elect more efficient and honest men. They treat each social abuse and evil as an isolated and casual phenomenon. They fail to see the connection between them all. For them, as for the late German-American statesman, Carl Schurz, there is no social problem.

#### SOCIALIST REFORMS AND THEIR PURPOSE

The aim of all Socialist reforms, on the other hand, is to strengthen the working class economically and politically and to pave the way for the introduction of the Socialist state. The effect of every true Socialist reform must be to transfer some measure of power from the employing classes.



A Socialist reform must be in the nature of a working-class conquest.

The Socialist reform measures, moreover, are all inseparably and logically connected with each other, and only when taken together do they constitute an effective program of social progress. As separate and independent measures, they would be trivial, and from the point of view of the ultimate aim of the Socialist movement, none of them is alone of sufficient importance to warrant the concentration of all efforts for its realization.

The difference between the conceptions and methods of the ideological social reformers and those of the Socialists may be best shown by an illustration borrowed from the domain of pathology. A number of physicians are called into consultation on a grave case. The patient suffers from spells of coughing, headaches and high fever. His appetite is poor, and he is losing weight and color.

If the physicians are thoughtless and superficial practitioners, they will regard all these indications as so many separate and independent diseases. They will treat each of the supposed diseases separately or they will have each treated by a specialist in that particular branch of medicine. But if a scientific and experienced practitioner be called into the consultation, he will say to his colleagues: "Gentlemen, your diagnosis of the case is wrong. The patient does not suffer from a complication of diseases. The many supposed diseases which you have discovered are not independent casual ailments; they are all but symptoms of one grave organic disease—tuberculosis. If you succeed in banishing this organic disease from the patient's system, the symptoms which you take for independent ailments will disappear of themselves, but if you persist in treating the symptoms without attacking the root of them all, the patient cannot improve."

#### EVILS SPRING FROM A COMMON SOURCE.

And so, likewise, it is with the so-called evils of society. Our social conditions are not healthy and normal, our social

organism is ill. The abject poverty of the masses with all its concomitant evils—sickness, ignorance, vice and crime—is appalling, while the extravagant luxuries of our multi-millionaires serve only to accentuate the utter misery of “the other half.”

The gigantic trusts and monopolies which have developed within recent years, the periodic crises and chronic strikes and lockouts, are proof of the pathological condition of our industries, while boss rule, corruption and bribery mark a similar condition in our politics.

To the superficial student of society these conditions present so many separate “evils,” each one independent of the others, each one curable by itself. Hence our charity organizations, anti-vice leagues and societies for the prevention of crime; hence our “trust busters,” single taxers, municipal-ownership men and anti-corrupt-practices advocates; hence our social and political reformers of all types and specialties.

The Socialists, on the other hand, see a clear connection and necessary interdependence between these evils. They regard them all as mere symptoms of one deep-rooted disease of our social organism and do not believe in curing the mere symptoms without attacking the real disease. This disease the Socialists find in the unhealthy organization of our industries, based on the private ownership of the means of production and distribution.

#### ABOLITION OF CAPITALISM THE AIM.

Poverty is the direct result of capitalistic exploitation, and ignorance, vice and crime are poverty’s legitimate children. To maintain its rule, capitalism must dominate government and public sentiment, hence the constant incentive for the ruling classes to corrupt our politics, our press, pulpit and schools.

The ultimate aim of the Socialist movement is to convert the material means of production and distribution into the common property of the nation as the only radical and

effective cure of all social evils. But this program does not imply that the Socialists propose for the time being to remain inactive, complacently expecting the dawn of the millennium.

The scientific physician in our illustration, after having made his diagnosis, does not idly sit by expecting the coming of the day when the dread disease shall suddenly disappear. He proceeds to the proper course of treatment forthwith. By a systematic process of strengthening his patient's physique, by increasing his powers of resistance, he gradually restores his patient's health. In the course of the treatment he does not disdain palliatives calculated to give temporary relief, but all his remedies are strictly consistent and co-ordinate, and are applied with the ultimate object constantly in view—the destruction of the mortal germs of the organic disease.

#### LOGICAL CONSISTENCY OF SOCIALIST PROGRAM.

The Socialists proceed in a similar manner. They seek to prepare the people for the radical change of the industrial basis of society, by a systematic and never-ceasing course of education, training and organization, but in the meantime they do not reject temporary reform. They favor every real progressive measure, and work for such measures wherever and whenever an opportunity offers itself to them. But all the Socialist reforms are consistent parts of their general program; they all tend in one direction and serve one ultimate purpose.

To the ordinary social reformer, on the other hand, each evil is an evil by itself to be cured without change of the system which produces it, hence his "practical" reforms are doomed to failure. The charity worker may bring temporary relief to a few hundred poor, a mere atom in the world of poverty, but he cannot check poverty; the moral crusader may "save the souls" of some fallen women and men, but as long as the conditions which drive them into vice and crime remain unchanged, he cannot stamp out vice

and crime; the political reformer may succeed in a certain campaign, and defeat the corrupt "boss" or divorce the legislature from the corrupting lobby, but the next campaign will find a new "boss" at the head of his party and a new host of capitalist agents in control of the legislature as long as the industrial conditions which breed corruption in politics continue. Just as the middle-class reformers are reactionary and utopian, the ideological reformers are, as a rule, superficial and ineffective, and the Socialists can, therefore, gain nothing by a union with either.

From this analysis of the aims and nature of Socialist reforms it will be readily seen that Socialism cannot attach an equal importance to all the numerous reform measures agitated in our days. Its relation to each of such measures depends on the special character of that measure and its efficiency as a weapon in the class struggle.\*

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\*"Socialism in Theory and Practice," pp. 207-13.

## II.

## SOCIALISM AND OPPORTUNISM.

With Socialists, as Hillquit has shown, the legislative remedy demanded is one that fits in with a definite social philosophy and a definite scheme of action. With reformers, on the other hand, the advocated reform is a thing usually complete in itself—a change desired to cover a particular evil, with little or no reference to a general plan of social reconstruction. As a consequence, these reforms are usually trivial, often contradictory and still more often futile as means of correcting the recognized evil. Even when similar in appearance to measures demanded by the Socialists, or in certain cases, when borrowed from the language expressed in Socialist platforms, they are necessarily limited in scope and meaning by the social principles of the individual, group or party which advocates them. A demand, by way of example, for the abolition of child labor made by a middle-class reform party the membership of which comprises employers of children, cannot possibly mean the same thing as a similarly worded demand made by a party of the working class.

The futility of this opportunism—this pursuit of the trivial reform as opportunity dictates—is expressed in the following extract from an essay written by the editor of this series:

## TO THE REFORMERS.

There is, as society is now constituted, an enduring conflict of interests; and it is force, actual or potential, that wins advances. But it is force directed in particular ways, according to the issue and the political and economic environment. The reforms here instanced (as having been won) were incidental and partial; they had to do, for the most part, with political rather than economic matters, and they did not in themselves menace the supremacy of capitalism. Indeed, they may be held to have conserved, to have strengthened, capitalism; for they have furnished what has been so far a peaceful and harmless outlet for popular dissatisfaction. As they did not jeopard the system of capitalism, the question of granting them could, and often did,

divide and array against one another the various factions of the wealth-owning class.

Far clearer is the situation with regard to industrial reforms—reforms which, intended to safeguard the health and lives of the workers, do in effect lessen the profits of capitalists and curtail the powers of capitalism. Against such reforms all the various sections of the wealth-owning class are usually united. And yet it is in regard to just such reforms that you criticise the Socialist method and seek to better the condition of the workers by paltry philanthropies, by petty amendments to legislation, or by trifling administrative reforms—always by and through co-operation with the wealth-owning class or individual owners of wealth.

#### THE ILLUSION OF REFORM.

The obvious, the apparent argument is confessedly with you in your reformism, your opportunism. When you give coal to the fireless or medicine to the ill, you can of course see an immediate benefit. No one can doubt that charity relieves a multitude of hungry stomachs. The sympathetic interest, the kindly care, dispensed at some of the settlements is a helpful, and sometimes a lasting, benefit to the poor children of the tenements. Or, passing from benevolence to reform, one can see at least a possibility of benefits in laws ordering seats for shop-girls, reducing the hours of women in the factories, or in international agreements to promote labor legislation. One may even see, though doubtless more dimly, such possibility in laws aiming at the curtailment of graft, or the regulation of issues of stocks and bonds, or in the creation of public utilities commissions.

But there is, as Lester Ward tells us in his "Pure Sociology," an optical aberration known as the "illusion of the near." "If we magnify any object sufficiently," he writes, "it loses its character." To be seen rightly, it must be seen in relation to other things. These immediate and



incidental benefits, seen too closely and seen also under the magnifying influence of a sense of your personal share in achieving them, may take on a size and importance wholly out of their reality.

#### **GAINS AT SACRIFICE OF GREATER BENEFITS.**

For these things, even when real benefits, may be gained at a sacrifice of greater benefits. It is nothing at all of permanent social advantage to have a few hundred children welcomed and schooled at the settlements, if at the same time several hundred thousand children in the nation are added to the army of wage-earners. It is nothing to pass a few laws in behalf of the industrial workers, if every year the lot of thousands of wage-earners becomes more wretched. A general safety-appliance law is a delusive thing to boast of, if proof can be shown that the ratio of railway casualties increases year by year. Nor is it anything to be able to chronicle a step here and a step there toward municipal ownership, if constantly the concentration of wealth becomes more accentuated. Every one, even the most extreme revolutionist, is able to see petty changes for the better now and then. But what is needed is a clear-sighted estimate of these benefits in their relation to social progress as a whole.

Now the Socialist policy is not to disdain concessions from the owning or capitalist class, but to consider always the character of such concessions and the mode by which they are gained. The Socialist party never permits itself to forget that the working class may accept charity, or legislative or administrative gifts, at the sacrifice of its discipline, of its integrity, and in jeopardy of the attainment of its ultimate rights. A notable part of its function is perpetually to warn the working-class Esau not to sell his birthright for a bad meal.

#### **SOCIALIST LEGISLATIVE POLICY.**

In legislative bodies its representatives always vote for those measures believed by them to be of advantage to the

working class. But they concern themselves very little with those trumpery measures which in increasing number are introduced in our legislatures, and sometimes in our reform conventions—measures which reveal the dying struggles of the so-called “middle class,” and its desperate clutching at anything which may keep it for another moment above water. The rank and file of the Socialist party, however, take upon themselves the obligation not to vote for the men or measures of any other party. Of course, you denounce this policy. But even the most republican army of which any one can conceive would hardly permit the relaxation of its discipline to the point where the soldiers in the ranks could dicker with the enemy. And it is as members of a social army that the units of the Socialist party regard themselves. A ministerial function, hedged in and sharply bounded by democratic authority, is given to its legislative representatives, but the ranks themselves maintain a disciplined unity. The rank and file, then, sanction in their representatives the voting for beneficial measures, but they keep these legates ever charged with the duty of not forgetting the ultimate aim. . . .

#### WHY EFFORTS ARE FRUITLESS.

Year after year you devote your labors to one after another of many specific aims. But you are unable to show visible results for your toil. Thwarted in one endeavor, you as eagerly turn to another. But always and everywhere the results for you are about the same. You succeed in few, if any, instances in adding a single good to the general mass of mankind.

And why are your efforts so uniformly barren of achievement? They are futile because you refuse to recognize the terms and conditions of the social struggle. The struggle fundamentally is not against individuals, no matter how evil they may be. It is not fundamentally a struggle to terminate this or that incidental privilege or power which certain individuals or groups have seized. It is a

struggle against a class as the representative and chief support of a brutal economic system, and its meaning is the abolition of that system. The nature of the struggle is for the time somewhat obscured by the desperate protest of the middle class against extinction. But the real underlying factors of that struggle are the movement of general economic processes to their culmination, the awakening aggression of the working class against private ownership, and the stubborn determination of the ruling class to yield no point. The chimeras which you insist upon fighting, and which you name variously, each man after his wont, as Monopoly or Special Privilege or Discrimination, are merely the projected shadows of this great power, the ruling class. It is a class fortified in material possessions, in law, in administration, in ecclesiastical and educational institutions, and yet more in the awe and terror which it inspires and the subservience which it compels in ministers, educators and politicians, as well as in the common mass. It cannot be successfully combated by guerilla attacks waged against shadows. From its well-nigh impregnable fortifications it laughs at your desultory warfare.\*

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\*"Socialism and Success," pp. 51-57, 86-88.

## III.

## THE SOCIALIST PROGRAM.

## GENERAL CHARACTER OF SOCIALIST PROPOSALS.

Socialist proposals for immediate action are, as has been said in the previous chapter, all related to a general plan for the conquest of the political power and the establishment of a co-operative commonwealth. In the main they may be grouped under five headings:

- Betterment of the condition of labor.
- Extension of collective ownership.
- Expropriation of rent, interest and profit.
- Democratization of government.
- Increase of social service.

Generally speaking, the order given is the order of importance in which Socialists regard these measures. The essence of Socialism is collective ownership plus democratic management. But that, though the definite object, is at the same time the remoter object. The stress of the class struggle—the needs of millions of human beings for better wages, shorter hours, and improved conditions—inevitably makes these working-class needs the vital and immediate concern of the Socialist movement. From the beginning its platforms and programs, though explicitly declaring the ultimate purpose of Socialism, have dealt with a wide range of measures for the present benefit of the workers. In the main these measures have been formulated by Socialists and have later been adopted, though often in a weaker form, by the economic organizations of labor.

## THE "BROADER" ISSUES.

There are other issues than those logically included in these groups—issues of general social import—with which the Socialist movement has always concerned itself. Yet even these more general issues will be found to relate themselves in greater or less degree to one or more of the groups mentioned. The matter of freedom of speech, press and assemblage is a matter of democracy. So also are the matters of immigration, naturalization, the curbing of the judicial power and the socializing of the costs of administering the law. Income, inheritance and corporation taxes are a matter of expropriating rent, interest and profit. The extension of education and the conservation of health are matters of social service. Even the treatment of

vice and crime, which inevitably finds its way into the municipal programs of the Socialist party, is rightly a matter of social service; it is a matter of prevention rather than of repression or punishment—a matter of providing better environments and civilizing influences which divest vice of its impulse and crime of its motive.

The list of proposals for immediate action in the 1912 platform of the Socialist party of the United States is as follows:

### THE WORKING PROGRAM, 1912.

As measures calculated to strengthen the working class in its fight for the realization of its ultimate aim, the co-operative commonwealth, and to increase its powers of resistance to capitalist oppression, we advocate and pledge ourselves and our elected officers to the following program:

#### Collective Ownership.

1. The collective ownership and democratic management of railroads, wire and wireless telegraphs and telephones, express services, steamboat lines and all other social means of transportation and communication and of all large-scale industries.

2. The immediate acquirement by the municipalities, the states or the federal government of all grain elevators, stockyards, storage warehouses and other distributing agencies, in order to reduce the present extortionate cost of living.

3. The extension of the public domain to include mines, quarries, oil wells, forests and water power.

4. The further conservation and development of natural resources for the use and benefit of all the people:

(a) By scientific forestation and timber protection.

(b) By the reclamation of arid and swamp tracts.

(c) By the storage of flood waters and the utilization of water power.

(d) By the stoppage of the present extravagant waste of the soil and of the products of mines and oil wells.

(e) By the development of highway and waterway systems.

5. The collective ownership of land wherever practicable, and in cases where such ownership is impracticable, the appropriation by taxation of the annual rental value of all land held for speculation or exploitation.

6. The collective ownership and democratic management of the banking and currency system.

7. The abolition of the monopoly ownership of patents and the substitution of collective ownership, with direct rewards to inventors by premiums or royalties.

#### Unemployment.

The immediate government relief of the unemployed by the extension of all useful public works. All persons employed on such works to be engaged directly by the government under a workday of not more than eight hours and at not less than the prevailing union wages. The government also to establish employment bureaus; to lend money to states and municipalities without interest for the purpose of carrying on public works, and to take such other measures within its power as will lessen the widespread misery of the workers caused by the misrule of the capitalist class.

#### Industrial Demands.

The conservation of human resources, particularly of the lives and well-being of the workers and their families:

1. By shortening the workday in keeping with the increased productiveness of machinery.

2. By securing to every worker a rest period of not less than a day and a half in each week.

3. By securing a more effective inspection of workshops, factories and mines.

4. By forbidding the employment of children under sixteen years of age.

5. By abolishing the brutal exploitation of convicts under the contract system, and substituting co-operative organization of industries in penitentiaries and workshops for the benefit of the convicts and their dependents.



6. By forbidding the interstate transportation of the products of child labor, of convict labor and of all uninspected factories and mines.

7. By abolishing the profit system in government work and substituting either the direct hire of labor or the awarding of contracts to co-operative groups of workers.

8. By establishing minimum wage scales.

9. By abolishing official charity and substituting a non-contributory system of old-age pensions, a general system of insurance by the state of all its members against unemployment, illness and invalidism and a system of compulsory insurance by employers of their workers, without cost to the latter, against industrial diseases, accidents and death.

#### Political Demands.

1. The absolute freedom of press, speech and assemblage.

2. The adoption of a graduated income tax, the increase of the rates of the present corporation tax and the extension of inheritance taxes, graduated in proportion to the value of the estate and to the nearness of kin—the proceeds of these taxes to be employed in the socialization of industry.

3. Unrestricted and equal suffrage for men and women.

4. The adoption of the initiative, referendum and recall and of proportional representation, nationally as well as locally.

5. The abolition of the senate and of the veto power of the president.

6. The election of the president and vice president by direct vote of the people.

7. The abolition of the power usurped by the supreme court of the United States to pass upon the constitutionality of the legislation enacted by congress. National laws to be

repealed only by act of congress or by a referendum vote of the whole people.

8. The abolition of the present restrictions upon the amendment of the constitution, so that that instrument may be amendable by a majority of the voters.

9. The granting of the right of suffrage in the District of Columbia with representation in congress and a democratic form of municipal government for purely local affairs.

10. The extension of democratic government to all United States territory.

11. The enactment of further measures for general education and particularly for vocational education in useful pursuits. The bureau of education to be made a department.

12. The enactment of further measures for the conservation of health. The creation of an independent bureau of health, with such restrictions as will secure full liberty of all schools to practice.

13. The separation of the present bureau of labor from the department of commerce and labor and its elevation to the rank of a department.

14. The abolition of all federal district courts and circuit courts of appeals. State courts to have jurisdiction in all cases arising between citizens of the several states and foreign corporations. The election of all judges for short terms.

15. The immediate curbing of the power of the courts to issue injunctions.

16. The free administration of justice.

17. The calling of a convention for the revision of the constitution of the United States.

Such measures of relief as we may be able to force from capitalism are but a preparation of the workers to seize the whole powers of government, in order that they may thereby lay hold of the whole system of socialized industry and thus come to their rightful inheritance.

### ORIGINS OF THE WORKING PROGRAM.

The origin of these proposals is a matter of some historic interest. In earlier platforms they were usually termed "demands"; in the present platform they are measures to the enactment of which the Socialist party pledges its efforts, though in the subheadings the word "demands" is retained. The assertion has often been made that they are not original with the Socialist party, but have been taken by it from other movements. In his colloquy with Mr. Hillquit before the Industrial Relations Commission in New York, Mr. Gompers asserted that these proposals, or most of them, had been "promulgated, declared and fought for" by the American Federation of Labor and that the Socialist party had put them into its platform "simply as vote-catchers." Asked by Mr. Hillquit if any of the other parties had purloined any of these planks, he replied, "Many of them," but on further questioning was unable to specify.

In a letter to the *Philadelphia North American* in August, 1912, Mr. William English Walling asserted that Mr. Roosevelt, whose progressive platform so closely followed the Socialist platform, had "not appropriated a single Socialist demand. He has merely taken up certain measures the Socialists took from other radicals." The Rev. John A. Ryan, in his controversy with Mr. Hillquit, goes further and declares ("Socialism: Promise or Menace?" p. 45): "No Socialist platform, so far as I am aware, contains a single reform proposal which was not borrowed from non-Socialist sources." It is a somewhat amazing fact that such declarations are reiterated over and over again by many persons of presumed intelligence who apparently have made not the slightest reference to the records.

### THE OLDER PLATFORMS.

A series of platforms and programs from 1848 to the present time furnishes a means of tracing the expression of many of these proposals by Socialist bodies. One of

these proposals—that for freedom of speech, press and assemblage—is common to all revolutionary movements; a few of them are of disputed or unknown origin, and a few may have been taken—if not in form, at least in substance—from the program of some contemporary labor or reform organization. With these few exceptions all of them bear evidence of an origin in the organized Socialist movement. There would appear to be no valid reason why the Socialist party, as the political expression of the working class, should not incorporate into its platform a soundly based demand made by an economic organization of labor. It happens, however, that as a rule the political movement has been first in the field with its demands and that the labor and reform bodies, when at all progressive, have merely followed the lead of the Socialists.

Among the many Socialist platforms or programs of the earlier period there are six of general significance. The Knights of Labor declaration of 1878 was not formally a Socialist platform, but it was animated throughout with a Socialist spirit, and it specifically demanded not only the collective ownership of the means of communication and transportation but also the abolition of the wage system. It is therefore included in the list. The six documents (counting the International resolutions as one) are as follows:

The program of the "Communist Manifesto," 1848.

The resolutions of the International, 1864-72.

The Gotha program, 1875.

The Knights of Labor declaration, 1878.

The platform of the Socialist Labor party, 1889.

The Erfurt program, 1891.

#### THE PLATFORM OF 1912.

The connection of the planks in the Socialist party platform of 1912 with these earlier programs and with the Socialist party platforms of 1901, 1904 and 1908 and the

"state program" and "municipal program" submitted to the 1904 convention, is as follows:

**Collective Ownership.**

1. State ownership of the means of communication and transportation is demanded in the "Communist Manifesto," in the Lausanne resolutions of the International (1867), in the Knights of Labor declaration and in the Socialist Labor platform. It is implied, without specific mention, in both the Gotha and Erfurt programs. The "extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state" is demanded in the "Communist Manifesto." The substance of the whole plank is contained in the Socialist party platforms of 1901, 1904 and 1908.

2. The demand for the immediate acquirement of the main distributive agencies for the purpose of reducing the cost of living is original with this platform.

3. The substance of the demand for the extension of the public domain is contained in the Brussels resolutions of the International (1868). The plank is repeated from the 1908 platform.

4. The general question of conservation is touched upon in the "Communist Manifesto" by the demand for the "cultivation of waste lands and the improvement of the soil generally," and it is specifically covered in the Socialist Labor platform by a demand for the "scientific management of forests and waterways" and for the prevention of "the waste of the natural resources of the country." The present plank is an elaboration of that in the 1908 platform. Conservation by act of the various states is demanded in the "state program" presented to the 1904 convention.

5. The abolition of private property in land, and, until that, the taxing of ground rents, is demanded in the "Communist Manifesto." The right of society to abolish private property in land is affirmed in the Lausanne resolutions. The common ownership of the land is asserted in the Knights of Labor declaration, and the inalienability of public land

in the Socialist Labor platform. No pronouncement on the general question of land appeared in the 1908 platform, the matter having been treated in the report of the farmers' committee.

6. A state monopoly of banking and credit is demanded in the "Communist Manifesto" and in the Knights of Labor declaration. The Socialist Labor platform demanded that the government retain the exclusive power to issue money. The platforms of 1901, 1904 and 1908 are silent on the matter.

7. The matter of patents is covered in the Socialist Labor platform much the same as here.

#### Unemployment.

The subject of involuntary unemployment has been emphasized by Socialist writers and speakers from the beginning. In the earlier platforms and programs, however, it received either no mention or at best an indirect mention. Doubtless the reason is to be found in the evident conviction of the earlier Socialists that under the capitalist system there could be no effective means of compelling either the state or the private capitalist to employ the idle. As late as 1891 Wilhelm Liebknecht declared that "the security against lack of employment belongs in the dreamland of 'the right to work.'" Even the Knights of Labor declaration has no word on the subject. The Socialist Labor platform, however, demanded the construction of public works for the employment of the idle. The present plank is a restatement of that in the platform of 1908. The question was also covered in the "state program" submitted to the 1904 convention. Insurance against unemployment is demanded in the platforms of 1901, 1904 and 1908 as well as the latest platform.

#### Industrial Demands.

1. The demand for a shorter workday is as old as the Socialist movement. Though not specifically mentioned in



the brief program of the "Communist Manifesto," its importance was repeatedly insisted upon by Marx and Engels. The demand appears in the Geneva resolutions (1866) and the Brussels resolutions (1868); a reduction "corresponding to the needs of society" is demanded in the Gotha program; a "gradual reduction" to eight hours is favored in the Knights of Labor declaration, a reduction "proportionate to the progress of production" in the Socialist Labor platform, and to "not more than eight hours" in the Erfurt program. The demand for a progressive reduction has appeared in each of the Socialist party platforms.

2. The weekly rest period is covered in the Gotha program by a demand for the abolition of Sunday labor and in the Erfurt program by a demand for a weekly intermission of thirty-six hours. The present plank repeats the demand of the 1908 platform.

3. Effective inspection of workshops and mines is demanded in the Gotha program, the Knights of Labor declaration, the Socialist Labor platform and the Erfurt program. It is also demanded in the "state program" of 1904 and in the 1908 platform.

4. The abolition of child labor is called for in the "Communist Manifesto," the Geneva resolutions, the Gotha program, the Knights of Labor declaration, the Socialist Labor platform and the Erfurt program. The present plank reiterates the language of the 1908 demand and the substance of the demand in the platform of 1904.

5. The Gotha program demands the "regulation of prison labor," the Knights of Labor declaration demands the prohibition of the "hiring of convict labor" and the Socialist Labor platform declares against the "convict system." The "state program" of 1904 treats the question in a more detailed manner. The proposal of the co-operative organization of convicts appears for the first time in the present platform.

6. The proposal to forbid the interstate transportation of injurious products or of products made under evil

conditions is modern and of course confined to the United States. It has already been applied to food, medicine and liquor. The idea is common property in a nation wherein the states are presumed to be autonomous, and it would be impossible to trace the origin of its formulation. The same plank appears in the 1908 platform.

7. The abolition of the profit system in government work seems to have made its first appearance in the Knights of Labor declaration in the demand for the abolition of the contract system. The Socialist Labor platform met the question by demanding that in awarding contracts preference be given to workmen's co-operative productive associations. The 1901 platform declares for "public industries" in which the workers shall be secured in "the full product of their labor." The 1904 "state program" declares for the "abolition of the contract system."

8. The minimum wage appears first to have been proposed, but only in relation to the mining industry, on July 18, 1874, by Mr. Lloyd Jones, an English journalist in close touch with the trade-unionists. The proposal appeared in the *Beehive*, a periodical which had supported the International. The proposal of a legal minimum wage for all sweated industries was first made by an organization of Socialists, the Fabian Society of London, in the nineties. The principle had its first application in New Zealand and Australia. Though a comparatively recent proposal, it is now to be found in most Socialist declarations. Despite the assertion of the Rev. John A. Ryan ("Socialism: Promise or Menace?" p. 45) that it appeared for the first time in an American Socialist platform in 1912, it is to be found in both the "state program" and the "municipal program" of 1904 ("Proceedings," pp. 317-20). It has probably often appeared in the various municipal and state platforms of the party. The Progressive platform of 1912 gave it a place, along with some seventeen other planks identical with, or similar to, planks in the Socialist platform. It is

opposed, according to Mr. Gompers, by the American Federation of Labor.

9. State insurance of the workers is a modern development of the movement for protection against the risks and defects of capitalist industry. The earlier demands met the problem in other ways. The Gotha program demanded protective and sanitary laws and an employer's liability act. The Knights of Labor declaration and the Socialist Labor platform substantially follow the Gotha program. The Erfurt program reiterated the demands for more stringent legislation and in addition declared for the "undertaking of the entire workingmen's insurance by the empire, with effective co-operation of the workmen in its administration." The first platform of the Socialist party (1901) contains a plank on this subject substantially the same as that in the present platform. The demand was also made in the 1904 and 1908 platforms.

#### **Political Demands.**

1. The general demand for freedom of speech, press and assemblage is at least as old as the revolutionary movement. It received particular emphasis in the Gotha and Erfurt programs. The present plank is the same as that in the 1908 platform.

2. The demand for the graduated income tax is in the "Communist Manifesto," the Geneva resolutions, the Gotha program, the Knights of Labor declaration, the Socialist Labor platform and the Erfurt program. The demand for an inheritance tax, graduated to the value of the estate and the nearness of kin, is in the Erfurt program, in the 1904 "state program" and the 1908 platform.

3. Universal equal suffrage is demanded "in a somewhat modest form, indirectly," according to Wilhelm Liebknecht's explanation, in the Gotha program, specifically in the Knights of Labor declaration, and strongly and unequivocally in the Socialist Labor platform and the Erfurt

program. It is in each of the platforms of the Socialist party.

4. Direct legislation was brought up by the Marxists in the Basel Congress (1869) of the International, but defeated by the "direct actionists" led by Bakunin. At a later congress it was approved. It is demanded in the Gotha program. The Knights of Labor declaration declares for the referendum. The Socialist Labor platform demands the initiative, referendum, recall and "minority representation." The Erfurt program declares for direct legislation and proportional representation. All four demands are in each of the Socialist party platforms.

5. The demand for the abolition of the senate and of the president's veto power may possibly have had a Populist or Greenback formulation. The veto power was opposed in the constitutional convention of 1787. At an early period the Socialist Labor party demanded the abolition of the presidency, vice presidency and senate, but that part of the demand regarding the executive heads of the government was stricken out in 1893. The abolition of the senate is demanded in the 1908 platform of the Socialist party.

6. The direct election of president and vice president by the people is an old proposal. Where it originated is a matter of uncertainty.

7. The demand for the abolition of the power of the supreme court to declare laws unconstitutional is at least a century old. The present plank repeats the language of the 1908 platform.

8. The demand for better methods of amending the constitution has been common property for some years. The plank appeared in somewhat different form in the 1908 platform.

9. The demand for local self-government for the District of Columbia has been made by the citizens of that district for thirty years. Its appearance in the Socialist platform is due to Representative Berger's efforts as a mem-

ber of the District of Columbia committee to make the district self-governing.

10. The demand for the extension of democratic government to all United States territory is probably original with this platform.

11. Free compulsory education and vocational training have been a part of every Socialist program from the beginning. The "Communist Manifesto" declared for "free education" and for "combination of education with industrial production." The Geneva and the Brussels resolutions mapped out comprehensive educational schemes. The Gotha program, Knights of Labor declaration, Socialist Labor platform and Erfurt program all deal with the matter of compulsory education. It is in each of the platforms of the Socialist party. Perhaps the first appearance of the demand that the bureau of education be made a department is in the Socialist party platform of 1908.

12. Conservation of health, and particularly of the health of the workers, is a subject appearing in one form or another in most Socialist programs for many years. The Gotha program calls for "the sanitary control of workmen's dwellings" in addition to other measures. The present plank is an elaboration of the one in the 1908 platform. The same platform called for the creation of a "department of public health."

13. The Knights of Labor declaration demanded a bureau of labor statistics. The American Federation of Labor repeated the demand in 1881. The Socialist Labor platform demanded "official statistics concerning the condition of labor." The subsequent demand that the labor bureau be made a department may possibly have originated with the American Federation of Labor. It is in the Socialist party platform of 1908. The first appearance, however, of the demand for the creation of a department of labor antedates the demand for even a labor bureau by many years. It was introduced by William H. Sylvis in the New York congress (1868) of the National Labor Union

and unanimously adopted. It was repeated in the platform of the National Labor Reform party in 1869. Sylvis, who was a Socialist in principle, seems to have got the idea from his correspondence with the central council of the International.

14. The demand for the abolition of federal district courts and circuit courts of appeals is original with this platform. The demand for the election of short-term judges appeared in the 1908 platform.

15. The demand for the curbing of the injunctional power of the courts has been common property for some years, especially since Judge William Howard Taft's injunction in the Ann Arbor case, in 1893, and the injunction against Eugene V. Debs in 1894. Perhaps the first specific treatment of the question from a radical standpoint was that by a committee of the Social Reform Club of New York City about 1896-97. From the beginning of its present phase, the abuse of the injunction has been denounced by Socialist speakers and writers. It was condemned in the resolution on the Colorado outrages approved by the convention of 1904. The abolition of the injunctional power is demanded in the "state program" of 1904 and in the platform of 1908.

16. The free administration of justice (or the law) is demanded in the Gotha program, the Socialist Labor platform and the Erfurt program. The Knights of Labor declaration satisfied itself with a demand for the "reform of legal procedure." "Free legal departments" are demanded in the "state program" of 1904. The present plank is repeated from the 1908 platform.

17. The calling of a convention to revise the constitution of the United States, though it has been often proposed, probably finds its first formal expression in this platform.

#### NO BORROWING FROM A. F. OF L.

It will thus be seen that nearly every one of these demands has a distinctly Socialist origin. A demand for the



compulsory education of children appeared in the platform of the American Federation of Labor in 1881, but this question had been covered by every Socialist platform of general application since 1848. In the same platform appeared a demand for the prohibition of the labor of children under fourteen, but this also had been covered by every general platform of the Socialist organizations. The enforcement of the national eight-hour law was also demanded in that year. But the shorter workday, too, had been dealt with by the Socialist organizations consistently since 1866.

There are two further measures included in the A. F. of L. resolutions of 1881 which relate to subjects dealt with in the 1912 platform of the Socialist party. One of these is concerned with convict labor and the other with effective inspection of workshops and mines. As has already been shown, these demands had an earlier appearance in Socialist platforms. That the Socialist movement has borrowed anything from the American Federation of Labor (other than the possible borrowing of the demand for the elevation of the labor bureau into a department, which the Federation borrowed from an earlier Socialist source) does not appear from this record. That it has borrowed from other sources, except in three or four instances, appears to be equally unprovable.

#### THE INDUSTRIAL CONGRESS PLATFORM.

In his concluding statement before the Industrial Relations Commission in New York (May 23, 1914) Mr. Gompers made this further reference to the Working Program of the Socialist party:

"I can recommend to every student, and particularly do I recommend to Mr. Hillquit, the reading of the declaration of purposes of the National Labor Union, which met at Rochester, somewhere in the sixties, and he will find that the declaration of 'immediate demands' contained in the Socialist party platform—the 'immediate demands' upon

which he questioned me yesterday—were more fully, amply and ably set forth by the National Labor Union than by the Socialist party, who purloined all this stuff from us.”

This statement is in every respect absurd. The convention to which Gompers refers was not that of the National Labor Union. It was an “industrial congress,” composed of representatives of a great number of labor organizations. In McNeill’s account of it (“The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today”) there is no mention of any representative of the National Labor Union, though many other organizations are named. Nor was the convention “somewhere in the sixties,” but on April 14-19, 1874. The platform was probably the work of George E. McNeill and Robert Schilling, the latter at that time a radical and an independent political actionist, though later he became an old-party politician.

The planks in the platform of this “industrial congress” bear little relation to those of the Socialist platform of 1912. It is ridiculous to speak of these planks as “fully, amply and ably” setting forth the Socialist demands of forty years later. Many of these planks are taken from the platform of the National Labor Reform party platform of 1869, which was influenced largely by the resolutions and manifestoes of the International, but in most cases the Rochester demands are weakened by an evident desire to satisfy a heterogeneous collection of delegates. The platform bears no evidence of an underlying principle of unity. A comparison with the Knights of Labor declaration of 1878, which was based on the Rochester declaration, but which in all respects is a stronger and more definite expression of labor’s claims, will prove instructive. It is characteristic of the differences between the two that whereas the Rochester declaration demands for the workers “a *just share* of the wealth they create,” the Knights of Labor declaration demands “the *full enjoyment* of the wealth they create.” Those who care to pursue the matter further may find the sources in Vol. IX of the “Documentary History of

American Industrial Society," pp. 233-37, and McNeill's "The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today," pp. 151-53. The complete Knights of Labor declaration may be found in Bliss' "New Encyclopedia of Social Reform."

#### INTEGRAL UNITY OF SOCIALIST PLATFORM.

It ought not to require a study of the records to show the preposterousness of the charge that the Socialist party has taken its planks haphazardly from other movements. The integral unity of each of its general platforms is of itself a refutation of the charge. New issues will of course from time to time require the formulation of new demands. But to be incorporated in a Socialist platform a demand must accord with the fundamental principles of Socialism. It is obviously unlikely that demands made by bodies of non-Socialists will often meet this test. When, as rarely happens, a demand is made by non-Socialists that applies to some important issue and that harmonizes with the Socialist philosophy and tactics, the movement has no hesitancy in accepting it as a part of its working program. Its purpose is to formulate and to prosecute a general plan of action against capitalism and its abuses, and it adopts all legitimate methods which accord with its plan.—  
W. J. G.

## IV.

**LEGISLATION FOR LABOR.****THE SOCIALIST POLICY.**

The Socialist party energetically supports all bona fide measures which are conceived to be of benefit to the working class. From these measures it expects not merely a temporary and partial relief for the toilers, but the strengthening and socializing of the working class so as to equip it for the struggle for emancipation. It recognizes that many of the contests for better conditions will be fought out in the shops between organized workmen and their employers. But it also recognizes that the great mass of workers are unorganized and have so far been found unready for organization. It further recognizes that even victorious contests in the shops do not, in the main, bring better conditions for the workers as a class, nor do they affect the general relation of employer and wage earner, nor lessen the enormous toll which capital takes from labor.

The Socialists have, therefore, always looked upon legislation as the chief means for ameliorating the conditions of labor and for breaking the hold of the capitalist class upon the land and the instruments of production and making these the common property of society. The Socialist policy in this regard, as well as an indication of present currents in labor legislation, is well expressed in the following extract from one of the correspondence leaflets of the Rand School of Social Science:

**THE NEED FOR LABOR LAWS.**

The more the capitalist development progresses, the more we have reasons for enforcing the demands of the workers through legislation. Standardization of industry, development of an international market, growth of powerful corporations and trusts, all make for greater homogeneity of the working class and for an increasing uniformity of its demands, which is a necessary prerequisite to labor legislation.

We have now in every country a large and growing body of industrial legislation, dealing with trusts, domestic and foreign commerce, immigration, labor unions, factory conditions, employment of women and minors, hours and

wages. To some extent this has been brought about by a recognition of some general national interests (to prevent physical deterioration, etc.) or by the action of disinterested reformers supported by some sections of the propertied classes; to a much greater extent it is a grudging concession to the demands of an increasingly self-reliant working class.

In the fight for labor legislation the workers begin to realize that they are a separate class with distinct interests, that they must organize themselves into a party of their own. The fact that they have been living under similar conditions of exploitation has made them a class negatively as against capital, but not yet positively for themselves. "Only in the struggle this mass comes together, constitutes itself as a class for itself, the interests it defends become class interests." (Karl Marx, "The Poverty of Philosophy.")

#### THE SOCIALIST GUIDING PRINCIPLE.

The guiding principle of Socialist policy in labor legislation, then, is to turn the group interests of the workers, whether they be organized by crafts, industries, establishments, locally or nationally, into national class interests, without losing sight of their ultimate international significance. As the military strategist considers every move with reference to the aim of the whole war, so the Socialist examines each step in labor legislation with regard, not only to its immediate effect on certain workers, but also to its bearing on the struggle for ultimate emancipation.

Socialists are opposed to lobbying for labor legislation before bourgeois legislators. The workers must invade the capitalist legislatures with representatives of their own class and their own party, the Socialist party, since this is the only party which aims at the complete abrogation of wage slavery through the conquest of political power by the working class for the emancipation of all mankind.

### TENDENCIES IN LABOR LEGISLATION.

Among the capitalist governments several currents can be traced within recent years. The bourgeoisie of France and Italy is trying to keep back every kind of social legislation, especially labor legislation. Hence the Syndicalist movement in these countries, which belittles political action of the workers on the strength of what the bourgeois parties have failed to accomplish.

In Germany, on the other hand, the recent stagnancy in labor legislation is explained by the fear of the bourgeoisie before the rising tide of Socialism. The point has been reached where every new concession to the working class threatens the very existence of the profit system. This deadlock may be overcome by a still greater increase of the power of the Social Democratic party.

The English bourgeois parties have tried to keep the workers away from Socialism through the most advanced social legislation. But every piece of new labor legislation encourages the workers and draws them nearer to Socialism.

In the United States we owe the first labor legislation to the activities of the early labor unions in the thirties of the past century. Since then most labor organizations have spent much time lobbying with capitalist politicians instead of fighting them. The results are meagre. The American unions have to live largely under judge-made laws. Conflict between state and national authority increases the difficulty of obtaining labor legislation. The state labor bureaus and the national department of labor (created in 1913) have little authority and still less means to help the workers in their struggles.\*

### CLASSES OF LABOR LEGISLATION.

The main objects of labor legislation have been and still are:  
Legalization of the right of combination.  
Reduction of the workday.

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\*Lesson I, "Social Problems and Socialist Policy."



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Sanitation, safeguarding and inspection of workshops and mines.

Compensation of wage earners for accidents and of their families for deaths suffered in industry.

Abolition of child labor.

Regulation of woman labor.

Establishment of "prevailing rates" of wages.

### THE RIGHT OF COMBINATION.

To all efforts for obtaining these legislative measures the Socialist movement has from its origin given its unqualified support. The right of combination was the primary need, and the early struggles of both the labor movement and the Socialist party were largely concentrated in the effort to have it legalized. Yet even since it has been generally legalized, new questions arising out of its application have constantly arisen. The Taff Vale decision in England in 1900, putting trade union funds virtually at the mercy of the employing class; the Osborne decision in 1909 forbidding the use of trade union funds for political purposes, and the long and bitter struggle in the United States and other countries between the labor organizations and the employers over questions of the boycott and "conspiracy," have shown that the right of combination, with the rights which are implied in it, is still, throughout most of the world, unwon. The English workers, by organizing themselves into a political party of their own class, forced the passage of the Trade Disputes act (1906) and the Trade Union act (1913), and have thus, for the time at least, virtually won a legal sanction for all activities which logically belong to this right; while the American workers, who are still largely voting their employers' tickets, have won nothing but the fancied security of a vague clause in the Clayton act (1914).

### REDUCTION OF THE WORKDAY.

The Geneva congress (1866) of the International declared, in a resolution written by Marx, that "the limitation of the workday is the first step in the direction of the emancipation of the working class," and every Socialist platform since that time has included this demand. The Socialist party has no objection to its attainment by "direct action" wherever that is possible, but insists that for the great mass of the workers the demand can be won only by legislative enactment. In this particular its policy is opposed to that of the American Federation of Labor, which in its convention of 1914 rejected a resolution in favor of a general agitation for an eight-hour day for men in private industries.

### PROTECTION AGAINST RISKS OF INDUSTRY.

That the Socialist party has always advocated the sanitation, safeguarding and inspection of work places may be seen by a reference to the previous chapter; the subject, therefore, needs no elaboration. Likewise it has for years advocated compensation for the casualties of industry. The particular method—that of insurance—by which the modern state attempts to deal with this problem, has, however, a non-Socialist and a non-labor origin. "The practical plan of workingmen's insurance," says Hillquit, "was first formulated by the well-known Austrian statesman and sociologist, Dr. Schaeffle, in 1867, and was elaborated by Professors Wagner, Schmoller and the other representatives of the school of social science known in Germany by the general designation of 'Socialism of the chair.'" Yet its practical realization and the steady extension of its application is "distinctly due to the propaganda of modern Socialism." As a governmental system it may date from the sickness insurance act (1883) and the accident insurance act (1884) of Germany, following the message of Emperor William I given to the Reichstag on November 17, 1881. The initiation of these laws was directly prompted by the wish to turn the working class from the Socialist movement. Upon their development by amendment and the addition of new features, particularly to that relating to accident insurance, the Socialist influence, as shown in a previous pamphlet ("Socialism and Government"), has been considerable. Wherever, in all lands, there is a movement to obtain for the workers insurance against the evils of capitalist industry, the Socialists will be found its earnest supporters.

### ABOLITION OF CHILD LABOR.

To the abolition of child labor the Socialist party has always given a special emphasis. Every general Socialist platform from the "Communist Manifesto" to the present time has dealt with this question. The evils of child labor and the methods to be taken to abolish it, are summed up in the following extract:

From the point of view of the working class, the evil of child labor is twofold: First, it is injurious to the children themselves, robbing them of childish pleasures, permanently stunting their bodies and minds, and often corrupting their character. Second, it is economically injurious to the adult workers. Children perform at less than a living wage an enormous amount of labor which would otherwise

be done by grown men and paid at double or treble the rate. Poverty forces children into the labor market, and their competition in the labor market in turn aggravates poverty.

So long as child labor is permitted, individual parents suffer economic loss if they keep their children in school and are thus tempted or forced to put them to work. It is a social problem, and must be dealt with by adequate legislation, strictly enforced and backed by trade-union activity.

Abolition of child labor is obviously practicable. So long as a million or more of adults are always unemployed, it is idle to say that the industrial system needs the labor of children. Capitalist greed for maximum profits and proletarian apathy and disunion are to blame.

Existing legislation will not be greatly improved unless the workers, through their political and industrial organizations, compel progress. Among the lines on which effort must be made are the following: Abolition of sweatshops and home industries; raising of the age limit for employment and for compulsory school attendance; provision of meals and clothing for children in school; amendment of laws so as to make it easier to detect and prove violations; increase of the number of inspectors, these to be at least partly chosen by labor organizations. A legal minimum wage is also to be considered as a means of making it unprofitable to employ children.\*

#### REGULATION OF WOMAN LABOR.

Measures for the special protection of women in industry have been advocated by Socialists for many years. The Gotha program demanded the prohibition of "all women's labor that is injurious to health and morality." Since that time the demands in behalf of women wage earners have been developed to cover a wide range of measures. The general question as it relates to the United States is concisely treated in the following extract:

In this country legislation with regard to both woman labor and to safety and sanitation is in an embryonic stage.

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\*Lesson II, "Social Problems and Socialist Policy."

For a long time factory work for women was considered as a temporary condition, from which they escaped through marriage. But the last three censuses show an undiminished proportion of women in factories. In 1909 they constituted nearly one-fifth of the 6,615,000 wage workers in factories proper. Women prefer factory work to domestic service. Bad as is the factory, the home is generally a still worse place for work. Both in domestic service and in home industry the hours of labor are long and irregular, living conditions are bad, pay is low, normal family life is impossible, and the close contact with the employer's family involves greater moral dangers to women and young people than in the case of factory work. But this does not indicate that conditions in the factories are good.

In this as in other fields, we have forty-nine sets of laws—one national and forty-eight state. Under the interstate commerce and post-roads clauses of the constitution, congress could enact a comprehensive system of national labor laws.

The state safety laws show a bewildering variety. Wisconsin has some of the best laws, owing to the influence of the Socialist party there. In that state women are excluded from a large number of occupations dangerous to health or morals. In several states women are excluded from mines and quarries; in Arizona and Maryland from all occupations requiring the workers to be constantly on their feet; in Minnesota and Massachusetts from work in saloons. Several states require seats for women. . . . Varying and generally insufficient regulations exist as regards toilets, wash rooms, dressing rooms, intermissions, cleanliness of factories, removal of dust and fumes, in some cases for all workshops, sometimes only in those employing women. . . .

#### Grounds for Legislation.

Legislation for the protection of wage-working women has been stubbornly opposed on the ground that it is "class legislation," that it violates women's "right of free con-

tract," that women are not wards of the state, as children admittedly are. Only through long struggles has the principle been established that the general "police powers" of the state include the power to legislate for the protection of women as well as for the protection of health and life in general. The argument on the police power implies that such legislation aims to safeguard the general welfare of the community. Court decisions are conflicting, but in recent years there has been a tendency to uphold such laws. . . .

In two important cases (*Muller vs. Oregon*, 208 U. S. 412, 1908; and *Ritchie vs. Illinois*, 244 Ill., 509, 1910) the right of state legislatures to limit the working hours of women was challenged and was finally upheld by the courts on the ground that the welfare of the race is involved in the health of women, as probable mothers. It is bad biology to forget that the health of fathers likewise affects the future of the race; it is characteristic of class law to deny the working woman protection for her own sake and care for her only as a child-bearer; yet the decisions are of practical value to the working class. Each departure from the individualistic free-contract theory makes further progress a little easier. A California law limiting women's workday to eight hours and one in New York limiting it to ten hours have since been upheld on similar grounds.

Judicial interpretation of the constitution is influenced by politics, though it pretends not to be. The stronger the party of the working class becomes, the more likely are the courts to find labor laws constitutional and reasonable.\*

#### Raising the Wage Rate.

Since the organization of labor unions one of their prime objects has been the obtaining for work done for the municipalities, the states or the nation, whether done directly or by contract, the "prevailing rate" of wages. By the "prevailing rate" the unions have of course meant the union rate. The demand has been that the state should be a model employer;

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\*Lesson III, "Social Problems and Socialist Policy."



or if not a model one at least an employer no worse than the average, and that the wage rates forced from the private capitalist should be equalled by those paid by administrative bodies. The long and stubborn contest for this measure has had at all times the ardent support of the Socialist party. It has been, moreover, largely successful, and most administrative bodies throughout the United States decree union conditions for work performed for them.

But in more recent times this demand has broadened. Upon the state is now urged the demand that not only shall it be a model employer, but that it shall exercise its power in compelling private employers to pay living wages. A consideration of the fact that vast multitudes of the working class are helpless before the employing class makes necessary the establishment of the legal minimum wage. So far its application has been, in the main, restricted to women and minors. It needs no gift of prophecy, however, to enable one to see that, once generally established for women and minors, the legal minimum will be extended to adult male workers as well. The arguments for this measure are summed up in the following extract:

#### Need of the Legal Minimum.

1. Women and minors (also the so-called common laborers and unskilled "hands") are weak in organization, while employers are well organized.

2. The influx of great numbers of immigrants, mostly with a low standard of living, with little knowledge of American conditions, and not easily organizable on account of their differences of languages, etc., necessitates strong protective measures.

3. The piece-wage system threatens the standard of living even of many organized workers; the quickest workers set the pace, all have to speed up, and the employer is able to cut the piece-rates so that most of the workers hardly get a living wage.

4. Even time-workers suffer from irregularity of employment, especially in the seasonal industries. Vast numbers of workers are employed only eight or nine months in the year, but they must live through twelve months; their real wages are proportionately less than their wage-rates,



and this very fact drives them into cut-throat competition during the busy season.

5. In recent years, from various causes, the cost of living has risen faster than wages. The purchasing power of wages has actually fallen. Since trade-union action has failed to prevent this, legal action is necessary.

The minimum-wage law can never be a substitute for legal limitation of the workday, but must be considered supplementary to it.

We must remember, too, that it is only a makeshift, though it may be a very useful and necessary one. It will not abolish exploitation, but only limit it, protecting the weakest competitors in the labor market. Only social ownership of the social means of production can be our goal. These reforms are means to that end.\*

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\*Lesson IV, "Social Problems and Socialist Policy."

## V.

**THE ADVANCE TOWARD SOCIALISM.**

For the most part, the measures, other than the ones included under labor legislation, which are demanded by the Socialists are those which tend more directly to the transformation of society into an industrial democracy in which rent, interest and profit are abolished. Regarding the validity or the importance of some of these measures there is, of course, a division of opinion, even among Socialists.

**COLLECTIVE OWNERSHIP.**

On the matter of the extension of collective ownership the division is pronounced. Doubtless a considerable number of Socialists hold that collective ownership under the present state—that is, state capitalism—is not a step toward democratic Socialism, but in reality a strengthening of the power of capitalism.

This view is opposed, however, by many Socialists—very likely an overwhelming majority—who maintain that any measure of increased social control over industry is a preparation for the revolution—a change which will make easier the transformation of society into a co-operative commonwealth. Just as they look with satisfaction upon the concentration of capital in the hands of the trust, so also they view the concentration of industry in the hands of the state. Such Socialists are fully aware of the manifold evils of state capitalism, as they are also aware of the evils of the trust; they hold, however, that these evils can the sooner be remedied by permitting, and even encouraging, the present tendencies to develop. Moreover, they do not neglect, during the transition period, to fight energetically the industrial evils of overwork, underpay and the denial of the right of organization, whether imposed by the trust or by the state-owned enterprise.

**DEMOCRATIZATION OF POLITICS AND INDUSTRY.**

The Socialist movement has from its origin favored every practicable measure in the form of income, inheritance and other taxes for the purpose of diminishing the toll which capital takes from labor and equalizing the costs of government. These measures, too, are a preparation for Socialism. But it is in the more fundamental matter of democratizing government that Socialist activity has found a characteristic expression.

Always and everywhere the Socialist movement has advocated the measures which are intended to make the whole adult population of any society the equal participants in its governmental action. Complete suffrage for both sexes, proportional representation, the initiative, the referendum and the recall, have been consistently and energetically striven for by the Socialists. Their program of democratization, however, goes further than this; it includes the democratization not only of politics but of industry—the participation by the workers in the administration of the enterprises in which they are employed. There can be no Socialism without this; and any step in this direction under the present regime is an advance toward Socialism.

### INCREASE OF SOCIAL SERVICE.

All measures by which the nation, the state or province and the municipality are directed to furnish social service to the people are invariably supported by Socialists. Hospitals, sanitariums, dispensaries; public schools, institutions for special lines of education and vocational training, experiment stations for discovering and disseminating information useful to the workers; parks, playgrounds, libraries and museums—all these and a thousand other exercises of the social function of government are demanded as a preparation for Socialism. These measures are all an anticipation of the future society, in which public service will be extended and developed to a degree undreamed of today. The motive which prompts a capitalist state to grant them may be interested or disinterested, simple or complex, but the solid and enduring results which flow from them cannot be gainsaid. They point the way to a society of each for all and all for each.

### CO-OPERATION.

The Socialist activities so far dealt with have had to do primarily with legislative action. There remains for mention one other activity, not legislative but voluntary, upon which, as a preparation for Socialism, an increasing emphasis is placed. That is co-operation.

Co-operative associations were approved by the second congress of the International (Lausanne, 1867), though it warned the workers against the danger of harmonizing such associations with the existing system and thus creating a favored class of workers. They were again approved, in a somewhat different manner, at the third congress (Brussels, 1868).

It was the principle, rather than the practice as then ex-

isting, to which these early congresses gave their sanction. For co-operation at that time, though it had been proposed by Robert Owen as a means of transforming society, had developed merely as a movement for saving to the consumer the profit of the retailer. It was not until years afterward, and even then restricted to the continent of Europe, that co-operation became an ally of the Socialist movement. Belgium has been the scene of its most successful career; but though Belgium offered a conspicuous and even wonderful example of the potentialities of co-operation, the Socialist movement in other lands was tardy in giving it whole-hearted support.

The international congress at Copenhagen (1910) corrected this attitude by an emphatic approval and recommendation of the extension of such enterprises. The 1912 convention of the Socialist party of the United States also gave it approval, though it asked for further data before making a definite pronouncement as to its applicability to the United States. The report is as follows:

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

Just as the labor unions fight for industrial self-control for the working class, the Socialist party for political self-control, and the labor and Socialist press for intellectual self-control for the workers, so the co-operative movement fights for an increasing degree of economic self-control for the workers through the ownership and use of industrial and commercial capital by organized groups of the workers.

The development and successful operation of the co-operative movement in connection with the international labor movement is an historical fact, which cannot be disputed. While in some countries it may seem for the time being to have checked other lines of working class activity, it seems to be true also that "the economic power of a class at a given stage of development turns into political power."

The value of the co-operative movement to the working class has been recognized by the Socialist party, though reluctantly at first. It was recently so recognized at the Copenhagen congress in 1910, the American delegates voting for the resolution.

Following the path of other national organizations of the Socialist party, the Socialist party of America must

recognize the fact of the existence on the American continent of a successful co-operative movement, though it has not as yet been brought into any unified form.

Your committee has not been able to gather any adequate data, but is informed from the personal knowledge of those who came before the committee, of distributive co-operatives doing a total business of not less than twenty million dollars a year, in only a few of the states of the union. Nearly one thousand local organizations are within the knowledge of those reporting these facts to your committee, which are operating successfully.

That there is still room within the developing processes of the capitalist system in this country for the inauguration and building up of a strong and successful co-operative movement, is evident from the facts already adduced especially in view of other and as yet unverified statements which are nevertheless largely of common knowledge.

The benefits claimed by those most closely connected with the international co-operative movement are threefold, and relate to:

1. The furnishing of an improved quality of food and other supplies to the co-operators;
2. The actual increase of the economic resources of the co-operators, through the control of their own purchasing power, and the building up of reserve funds which have been of great service to the industrial and political arms of the labor movement;
3. The training of members of the working class in the process of industrial and commercial administrative work, and developing this new capacity among them, thus proving that it is possible not only to do without the capitalist's capital but also to do without his alleged superior intelligence.

The most successful co-operatives in America seem to be among the groups of foreign-speaking workers of the same nationality who furnish a community highly homogeneous, having similar habits and customs of life; and

among the farmers, who find it possible to combine at once their buying and selling powers in the same organization.

In view of the failures which have occurred in this and other countries in connection with the efforts to establish co-operatives, we recommend that a committee of five persons be elected by this convention, not confined to delegates in the convention, who shall be given the assistance of the national office in making an investigation into the facts concerning the co-operative movement; the committee to make a special effort to ascertain what bearing the degree of industrial development and organization in any particular locality has upon the operation of co-operation in that locality; to make tentative reports from time to time through the national office and the party press; and to make a final report at the next national convention.

#### MERITS AND DEFECTS OF CO-OPERATIVE COLONIES.

Because the subject is closely related to the foregoing, even though the venture itself is not usually regarded by Socialists as a step toward Socialism, an estimate of co-operative colonies will be given in this place. Colonies were ridiculed by the earlier Marxians (as in the case of Cabet's Icaria); and it was a controversy over the matter which dissolved the Social Democracy of America in 1898 and brought about the organization of the Social Democratic party. Many Socialists, however, have continued to look to this experiment as a means, and perhaps the chief means, of transforming society. The following statement from the *APPEAL TO REASON* expresses what is doubtless the prevailing view of Socialists the world over:

#### NEITHER ENDORSES NOR CONDEMNS.

The *APPEAL* neither endorses nor condemns co-operative colonies in general. It knows that there have been many co-operative colonies that have failed, while it is at the same time aware that some co-operative colonies have succeeded. It knows that there have been particular co-operative colonies that were promoted with the object of graft, yet on the other hand it is certain that there have been many co-operative colonies that were established with



unimpeachable motives and were the fruitage of sincere idealism.

The principle of co-operation is fundamentally correct, and the APPEAL does not care to quarrel with those few idealists who endeavor to apply this principle in a limited way among congenial groups. This group co-operation is very good for those who may be personally fortunate enough to get in a group that is successful; but it is social co-operation, the application of the principle of associated activity to the entire relations of society, that the APPEAL is concerned about, and it is this social co-operation that the great body of men and women who suffer from capitalism are concerned about. The APPEAL wishes to extend co-operation to all, not confine it to a few.

It is probable that so long as capitalism shall last there will be men and women joining here and there in the forming of co-operative colonies; men and women whose natures are too sensitive to endure the heartless inhumanity of the competitive system, and who would establish a select little paradise "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife," not reflecting upon the essential selfishness of their course. But the truth is that capitalism will never be ended nor the problem of poverty be solved in this way; for the masses of the people these ideal individual colonies signify no relief. The principle of co-operation, to be successful and beneficial to the race as a whole, must be applied widely to all society; it must constitute the ruling principle of society, and dominate every important social relation.

#### FUNDAMENTALLY INDIVIDUALISTIC.

Co-operative colonies are fundamentally individualistic, in that their purpose is to provide a haven from the wrongs of capitalism for a particular group of individuals, regardless in the main of the general problem of emancipation that confronts the remaining members of capitalist society. The method of propaganda which shall succeed in bringing the order of Socialism out of the chaos of capitalism must be

devoid of even the appearance of individualism—it must emphasize the social ideal in its broadest sense and seek to establish a collective society of all men and women through the collective efforts of all men and women. The purpose of the Utopian colonist is to apply the principle of co-operation successfully to an individual colony; the purpose of the real revolutionist is to apply the principle of co-operation successfully to all society.

There are but two great principles of social activity: the principle of competition and the principle of co-operation. According to the best records at hand human society has always been governed by the principle of competition. And it will continue to be governed by the principle of competition until the principle of co-operation obtains complete and unfettered sway as the dominant principle of society. For there is no halfway house between competition and co-operation. A system must be governed by one or the other of these principles. This is not saying that co-operation cannot exist in the midst of competition, or that a certain degree of minor competition will not accompany the most widespread co-operation; it is merely asserting that a particular principle must dominate society, and that this principle will determine the social conditions which generally prevail.

#### MUST TRANSFORM WHOLE SOCIETY.

Competition is at present the dominant and controlling principle of human society, and if the co-operative movement is to realize its whole ideal it must make co-operation succeed competition as the dominant social principle. It must make co-operation extend triumphantly throughout all society, rather than strive to work out the theory academically in the minute laboratory of a co-operative colony.

The co-operative colonist is sincere, no doubt. But he is not going to change society or improve the conditions of his fellow men. For one thing, he is not directly concerned with the lot of his social brethren generally—if he were he

would be out in the big arena of capitalism, sharing its hardships and rebuffs with his comrades in the grand and heroic struggle to secure social salvation for all; instead he chooses to withdraw himself, with a dreamy company of kindred souls, into the still backwater of a small colony where the fierce torrent of the social stream does not reach. Thus did the medieval saints isolate themselves from a sinful world, and devote their lives to the barren practice of individual virtue.

And again, the co-operative colonist does not proceed scientifically to put co-operation into effect. He leaves competition the dominant principle of society. His little paradise has several doors for admitting hell. Through these doors the private capitalist may enter and demand toll. The colonist cannot avoid a certain degree of dependence on the outside world—on the big, ruling, indispensable industries. He is not equipped to do the work that is performed by the vast and intricate mechanism of competitive society. The club of profits descends, if lightly, upon his head.

But even if the colonist succeeds he has gained but a narrow success. The co-operative colony, however ideal and prosperous, is not going to help the rest of the world or the people who live in it. At best the co-operative colonist can improve the condition of himself and his fellow colonists only. His kind of co-operation is the co-operation of the individual group, the co-operation which bestows its advantages upon a few and leaves the many for the devil to take.

#### A REFUGE OF THE IDEALIST.

The co-operative colony is a peculiar product of the age. It is the refuge of the idealist from the unideal conditions of society. There are co-operative colonies, there will doubtless continue to be co-operative colonies, and the APPEAL does not see why they should not be and continue to be. They are guided primarily by the correct principle—that of co-operation—and they may be useful from a propaganda point of view as object lessons in co-operation. But

the social problem will be solved—well, it will be solved *socially*. It will be solved by the great revolutionary movement (expressing itself politically through the Socialist party, industrially through the labor unions, and through a thousand unseen yet persistent forces that are silently leavening the social lump) that is patiently permeating modern industrial society with new conceptions, that is creating new social necessities out of new social conditions, that is changing men's relations of work and leaving its radical imprint on every important and even the most commonplace relation of life.\*

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\*Appeal to Reason, June 12, 1915.

## VI.

## GENERAL SOCIAL SCHEMES.

The groups of measures enumerated in the foregoing chapters do not, of course, include all that the Socialists support. With the Latin comic poet Terence the Socialist may say, "Nothing that is human is apart from my interest;" and all things that make for a more self-reliant democracy and a higher civilization come within the scope of Socialist endeavor. The measures enumerated are, however, those which most occupy the attention of Socialists and upon the enacting or the effecting of which they base their hopes of the triumph of their cause.

## ANARCHISM AND COMMUNISM.

Of the many other measures, sincerely and earnestly advocated, which the Socialists regard as fruitless of real benefit there is no space here for consideration. This pamphlet would be incomplete, however, without reference to some of the more general schemes of social reconstruction which are proposed as substitutes for Socialism. Of the thing known variously as "individualist anarchism," "philosophical anarchism," "autonomism" and "scientific individualism," there is small cause for speaking, since whatever it is, it has had its day as a school or a movement seriously engaging any considerable number of minds. Of the thing known as anarchist-communism, also, no treatment is here necessary.

## SYNDICALISM.

Of syndicalism, however—an amalgam of anarchism, communism, trade unionism and Socialism—because it is more modern and because it has not yet entirely run its futile course, some mention may appropriately be made. It is defined in the following extract from John Spargo:

Syndicalism is a form of labor unionism which aims at the abolition of the capitalist system based upon the exploitation of the workers, and its replacement by a new social order free from class domination and exploitation. Its distinctive principle as a practical movement is that these ends are to be attained by the direct action of the unions, without parliamentary action or the intervention of the state. The distinctive feature of its ideal is that in the new

social order the political state will not exist, the only form of government being the administration of industry directly by the workers themselves.

Here or there may be found a syndicalist to whom some part of this definition may not be acceptable, for syndicalism is in the process of making, as it were, and is for that reason not capable of rigid definition. On the whole, our definition will probably be acceptable to the vast majority of syndicalists.

#### A BLEND OF ANARCHISM AND SOCIALISM.

It will be seen that syndicalism is primarily an amalgam of anarchist and Socialist theories. The class struggle, which the anarchists logically deny, is a fundamental principle of syndicalism. The necessity of political action and the conquest of the state by the proletariat, which Socialists affirm, the syndicalists deny. The self-sufficiency of "direct action," which the anarchists have long preached, is the cornerstone of syndicalist policy. The municipalization and nationalization of industry, which is everywhere a central demand in the Socialist program, syndicalism rejects completely with utter disdain. There is a much greater amount of anarchism than of Marxian Socialism in the syndicalist amalgam! But there is another element in the amalgam, namely, trade-unionism. The chief weapon of syndicalism, the principal form of "direct action," is that weapon which is characteristic of trade-unionism and without which trade-unionism could not have existed, the strike. It is quite an interesting study to observe how the most reactionary of old-fashioned labor unionists and syndicalists arrive at the same practical result. Believing in the sufficiency of trade-unionism, relying completely upon the strike and the boycott, the old-fashioned unionist denies the need for political action. He points to the fact that certain trades enjoy the eight-hour workday, for example, won by the union and not brought about by legislation. The syndicalist takes the



same attitude and defends it by the same argument. Extremes meet!

As a rough classification it may be said that philosophically syndicalism is based upon the Socialist doctrine of class warfare; that its ideal is derived from the anarchist propaganda and that its weapons are the weapons of trade-unionism—whetted and polished upon the whetstone of Bakuninism.\*

#### SYNDICALISM IN AMERICA.

The form which syndicalism has taken in America is very different from that of France. It is here represented by two organizations calling themselves the Industrial Workers of the World—one with headquarters in Chicago and the other with headquarters in Detroit. French syndicalism is the philosophy and movement of the anti-political trade-unions. American syndicalism, if it may be called by that name, stands in violent opposition to the regular trade-unions and urges an entire reconstruction of the labor organizations. On this matter both wings of the movement are in entire agreement. But while the Chicago organization is either non-political or anti-political, the Detroit body demands equal activity on the political and economic fields. The Chicago industrialists decline to commit themselves to either Socialism or anarchism, and designate themselves simply as "revolutionary workers." The Detroit industrialists, on the other hand, call themselves Socialists and are, in the main, affiliated with the minor organization known as the Socialist Labor party. Neither organization has any connection with the Socialist party.

#### THE SINGLE TAX.

There remains for brief mention the proposed system of concentrating all taxes on the economic rent of land. It is known as the single tax and is commonly associated with the name of Henry George, who proposed it in a volume, "Progress and Poverty," published in 1879. He was not, however, the originator of the idea, which dates from the time of the French physiocrats, of the latter half of the eighteenth century, and was elaborated by a Scotch writer, Patrick Edward Dove (1815-1873) in a work, "The Theory of Human Progression," published in 1850.

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\*"Syndicalism, Industrial Unionism and Socialism," pp. 14-15.

**KARL MARX'S OPINION.**

Some time after the appearance, in 1879, of George's work, a copy was sent to Karl Marx by his friend, F. A. Sorge, who for a number years had been living in America. Marx's comment, expressed in a forceful letter to Sorge, the text of which is taken from Spargo's "Karl Marx," is as follows:

Before your copy of Henry George's book reached me, I received two other copies. . . . For the present I must limit myself to expressing very briefly my opinion of the book. The man is far behind the times in his theoretical views. He knows nothing about the nature of surplus-value, and so wastes his time, after the English manner, and in speculations which the English have left behind, about the relations of profit, rent, interest and so on. His fundamental idea is that everything would be all right if ground rents were paid to the state. (You will find that kind of payment mentioned in the "Communist Manifesto," among transitional measures). This view originated with the bourgeois economists, and it was next asserted—if we overlook a similar demand at the end of the eighteenth century—by the first radical followers of Ricardo, soon after his death. I expressed myself in regard to it in 1847, in the book which I wrote against Proudhon: "We know that the economists, such as Mill (Mill senior, not his son, John Stuart Mill, who has repeated it, but in a somewhat modified way), Cherbuliez, Hillditch and others, have demanded that rent should be paid to the state so as to serve as a substitute for taxes. This is a frank statement of the hatred felt by the industrial capitalist for the landowner, who seems to him to be a useless, unnecessary member of the organism of capitalist society."

As already stated, we inserted this appropriation of ground rent by the state among our many other demands, which, as also stated in the "Manifesto," are self-contradictory, and must be such of necessity.

The first to turn this demand of the radical English bourgeois economists into a Socialist panacea, to declare it

as the solution of the antagonisms inherent in the present system of production, was Colins, a Belgian by birth, and formerly an officer of hussars under Napoleon. In the latter days of Guizot and in the early days of Napoleon *le petit*, he rendered the world happy by pouring out on it, from Paris, thick volumes upon this "discovery" of his, as well as on the other discovery he made, viz: that there is no God in existence, but an "immortal" human soul, and that animals have no gift of perception. For if they had one, he argued, they would also have a soul, and we would be cannibals, and then no kingdom of justice could be established on earth. His "anti-landownership" theory as well as his soul, etc., theory, has been preached for years in the Paris monthly, *Philosophie de l'Avenir* by the few surviving followers of his, mostly Belgians. They call themselves "rational collectivists" and have commended Henry George.

After them, and along with them, this "Socialism" has, among others, been threaded out into a thick volume by a blockhead by the name of Samter, a Prussian banker, and formerly collector of lotteries.

All these "Socialists," including Colins, have this in common, that they let wage-labor, and with it capitalist production, stand as before, and want to deceive the world that by turning ground rent into a tax paid to the state, all the evils of the capitalist system will disappear of themselves. The whole is merely a socialistically fringed attempt to save the rule of capitalism, and to establish it in fact on a still larger foundation than it has at present.

This cloven hoof sticks out in a manner not to be mistaken in all declarations of Henry George. He is still less to be forgiven since he should have asked himself the question: "How is it that in the United States, where, in comparison with civilized Europe, the land was more accessible to the great mass of the people, and to a certain degree still is, that in this country the capitalist system, and the consequent servitude of the working class, have developed faster than in any other country?"

At the same time, George's book and the sensation which it has created in your country have this significance, that it is the first, even if unsuccessful, attempt to cut loose from the orthodox political economy.\*

#### SINGLE TAX NOT A REMEDY.

There is little that need be added to Marx's condemnation of the single tax as a remedy for the evils of capitalism. Its effect would be merely to give capitalism a broader basis and a freer reign. Its advocates are usually of the middle or professional class who are wholly alien to the spirit of the working class. It lends itself, however, to a compromise with anarchism, and some of its supporters are what are known as "anarchistic single taxers"—persons who are willing to accept just enough government or administration to collect the economic rent of land. It is essentially an eighteenth century doctrine and has no place under a highly developed system of capitalism.

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\*"Karl Marx," pp. 317-19.

## VII.

**SOCIALIST STATESMANSHIP.**

BY JOSEPH E. COHEN.

The nature of the weapons used in the class war from time to time depends upon circumstances that are forever changing. That explains why Socialists do not underestimate the good work done by organized labor, co-operative associations, workers' insurance societies and farmers' alliances, in their own field of endeavor. But as the relation between the two classes, notwithstanding, continues to intensify, Socialists come to lay more and more stress upon the winning of political power.

In entering politics Socialists act independently of other parties. The Socialist party does not compromise. It declines to support candidates of other parties, or to accept endorsements from them. "For our party and for our party tactics," says Liebknecht, in "No Compromise," "there is but one valid basis: the basis of the class struggle, out of which the Socialist party has sprung up, and out of which alone it can draw the necessary strength to bid defiance to every storm and to all its enemies." Hillquit emphasizes this point. "Experience has abundantly demonstrated," he says, "that whenever a party of the propertied classes has invited the political co-operation of the working class, the latter has, with few exceptions, been used by it as a cat's paw for the furtherance of its own class interests."

**CONCESSIONS, BUT NOT COMPROMISES.**

While, in practical work, concessions have to be made in going from principles to tactics, which Liebknecht was one of the first to see, he warns us that "questions of tactics very easily shift into questions of principle." So, again, Hillquit says: "The Socialist platform is the only political platform which is practically identical in its main features and important details in all civilized countries. . . . We

observe that while the details of Socialist policy and tactics vary in every country, and are modified with every economic and political change, its most salient features are identical everywhere, and have undergone but little change since the days when the Socialist party first established itself in practical politics." . . .

A few general points in Socialist tactics may be established at the outset. Convinced that the institutions of a period are largely the reflex of material conditions, and, in so far as they are to be altered, will be altered largely through the change of those conditions, the Socialist party does not concern itself, for instance, with religious matters or the form of the family. Belief in a supreme being cannot be eliminated by decree, as the French revolutionists imagined, nor re-established by proclamation, as the reaction thought. Socialists, therefore, do not permit their movement to be divided by sex, creed, race, nationality or other distinctions. In this respect, as in many others, the Socialist movement is inclusive rather than exclusive. . . .

#### BASIC CONDITIONS IN THE UNITED STATES.

In our own country we are confronted by conditions peculiar to ourselves. This nation is an amalgam of troops of immigrants from all lands, with different traditions, creeds and ideals, which have been more or less assimilated in what we term the American spirit. Apart from the important cleavage into classes, the various sections of the country have their own economic interests. The result of such a clash of divergent issues can only with difficulty be refined down to something in the shape of a broad national policy. This may be noted in the fact that from the very first our government has sought to solve all questions by compromise, in which the aroma of the fleshpot was, in no little degree, the guiding motive—compromise that too often only procrastinated the day of settlement that jeopardized the very existence of the nation.



One thing, however, is quite positive. Considering the pains taken by the framers of the constitution to thwart the will of the people at every turn, permitting the bill of rights to slip in as amendments, in order to silence criticism, which Professor J. Allen Smith well shows in his work on "The Spirit of American Government," it is doubtful if a greater myth has ever been invented than that of American liberty. Of no country is it truer than of America, that the government is merely "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."

#### A TWO-PARTY NATION.

America is a country of two parties. Not that the distinction between parties has always been easy to define. In point of fact parties have not hesitated to change front in interpreting the constitution "strictly" or "loosely" as it suited them. But every minor party has either quickly become a major party or its demands have been absorbed, if not emasculated, by one of the larger parties. When this has not happened, the minor party soon sunk into insignificance.

Regarding the questions which presumably separate Republicans and Democrats, James Bryce, in his "American Commonwealth," written in 1896, says, after enumerating several national matters: "Neither party has anything definite to say upon these issues; neither party has any principles, any distinctive tenets. . . . All has been lost except office or the hope of it." In municipal elections, as is well known, the deliberate attempt is being made to wipe out party lines. It is recognized that the two old parties are the obverse and reverse sides of the same shield. "Each equally leans upon the respectable and wealthy classes," continues Bryce, "the Republicans more particularly on these classes in the North, the Democrats on the same classes in the South." Since 1872 both parties have, in their platforms, mentioned the strug-

gle between capital and labor to be an issue. But they did little more than mention it.

#### IMMEDIATE MEASURES A PREPARATION FOR SOCIALISM.

This brings us to the problem of the Socialist party's platform. In that platform the amount of importance placed in the working program of industrial, political and social measures comprising its more immediate demands depends entirely upon general circumstances. . . . Socialists do not accept the theory that the misery should be permitted to increase. Moreover, what melioration the Socialist party is able to work does not bear the taint of pauperism. It is received as part payment of labor's rightful heritage. Nor is that melioration desired simply as palliative. It is accepted as being in line with the progress of the working class.

Immediate measures are not sufficient unto themselves. Thus even Jaures, who represents the more moderate wing of the Socialist party, says in his "Studies in Socialism": "So long as a class does not own and govern the whole social machine, it can seize a few factories and yards if it wants to, but it really possesses nothing. To hold in one's hands a few pebbles of a deserted road is not to be the master of transportation." For this reason the working program must be considered as an organic whole, which, while it serves the more proximate needs of the wealth producers, is nevertheless animated by the ideal of complete emancipation from the dominion of capital.

#### THE INSTRUMENT OF LEGISLATION.

Since Socialism is not a ready-made system, but an organic growth, in parliamentary activity Socialists must work with the material at hand, even to completing the work begun, or imperfectly done, by their predecessors of another political faith. In fact, Socialists can support many measures advanced by their opponents. Thus Marx designated as a revolution the ten-hour factory law se-

cured in England through the conflict between capitalists and landlords, because it involved the new principle of state aid for the workers. And so Bebel supported Bismarck's working people's insurance law, although it was one of the measures with which Bismarck hoped to stamp out the growing Socialist sentiment.

Because victories come first in municipalities, it is here principally that Socialists have thus far been able to shape legislation and administration to their liking. Furthermore, because it has its finger upon the seat of government, and can, guided by a real social conscience, keep that "eternal vigilance" which Wendell Phillips held to be "the price of liberty," the municipality is apt to be entrusted with the greatest measure of power by Socialists. So Hillquit says: "While the state as such will probably retain certain general functions, it will no doubt be found more convenient to vest the more vital and direct functions in political organizations embracing smaller territories. The Socialists regard the present city or township as the nucleus of such a political unit." . . .

#### THE MISSION OF THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT.

The task which it is the historic mission of the Socialist movement of the world to achieve is as magnificent in its proportions as it is in its ideals. The tremendous nature of that task cannot be overestimated. Kautsky well reminds us, in one of the concluding passages of his great work on the social revolution: "The proletariat will require high intelligence, strong discipline, perfect organization of its great masses; and these must, at the same time, have become most indispensable in economic life if it is to attain the strength sufficient to overcome so formidable an opponent. We may expect that it will only succeed in the latter when it will have developed these qualities in the highest degree, and that, therefore, the domination of the proletariat, and with it the social revolution, will not take place until not only the economic, but also the psychological

conditions of a Socialist society are sufficiently ripened."

The Socialist looks forward to the future with the enthusiasm of certain victory. For the stream of the new world thought and movement is flowing on. Little more than half a century ago its headwaters gathered from the rock-ribbed mountains of philosophy, economics, politics and history. Here a brook empties its crystal clear waters of learning into it; there a sister current greets it. Further along is its confluence with science; art and literature light its way. The stream rushes on. It is now international in character. It ever broadens, reaches into new lands, gains in prestige. It commands the voice of governments; it swerves the destiny of nations. As its power grows, kingdoms tremble, thrones totter, tyrannies fall. The social revolution is fought and won. The old epoch—the epoch of class strife and subjection of the toilers—is ended. The new era—the era of the comradeship and freedom of labor—is begun.\*

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\*"Socialism for Students," pp. 134-48.

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